

WASHINGTON (September 9) – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) today said he is outraged by an “indefensible” regulation that could require the demolition of storm shelters built to protect school children in Alabama after the deadly tornadoes of April 27.

In a letter to President Obama, Bachus said that he will introduce legislation to prohibit the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) from tearing down storm shelters that were constructed to accompany portable classrooms. In the meantime, Congressman Bachus is asking the President to direct FEMA to suspend a policy that one school administrator has flatly stated “stinks.”

“It makes no sense to demolish perfectly good storm shelters just to satisfy a misguided bureaucratic requirement. School administrators who find themselves caught in a classic government Catch-22 are rightly upset, because the safety of our children and citizens should always be the foremost concern. If it takes legislation to set this right, that’s what we will do,” said Bachus, who is Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee.

Under current FEMA policy, storm shelters built with FEMA funds to serve portable classrooms must be torn down once damaged schools have been repaired or replaced. While the structures can be purchased from FEMA at “fair market” rates, the cost is prohibitive for school systems already dealing with storm-related expenses. The added insult, said Bachus, is that the shelters would then be torn down using more taxpayer funds.

“To use the words of one school official, to tear a shelter down when it could be used by a community, something is just not right about that. In fact, it’s downright crazy. Building more storm shelters has been a priority for the State of Alabama since the tornadoes. We can’t afford to lose any that we have now,” Bachus said.

To view Congressman Bachus' letter to the President, [click here](#).

